

July 31, 2023

Hon. Donna Harpauer
Minister of Finance
Government of Saskatchewan
Email: fin.minister@gov.sk.ca

Hon. Jeremy Harrison
Minister of Trade and Export Development
Government of Saskatchewan
Email: Minister.TED@gov.sk.ca

Dear Ministers Harpauer and Harrison,

BC's Securing Small Business Rebate Program

Growing numbers of people are living on Saskatoon's streets gripped by severe drug addiction or complex mental health challenges.

These vulnerable people live on our streets because they lack the capacity to manage the assistance they are given or they are ineligible for shelter because they pose a safety risk to others. The result: the cost and consequences are levied on local business owners who are left to deal with vandalism, property damage, and petty crime.

Direct costs involve significantly higher insurance, security, hiring, and capital repair/replacement costs. Dollars spent in these areas mean fewer dollars to create the jobs and generate economic activity we all need to keep our city growing.

As the province looks to help those with severe addictions and/or mental health challenges, we urge you to consider direct supports to small and medium size businesses who are incurring the costs of keeping our local communities clean, safe, accessible and open for business.

Last week, the BC Government announced a new "Securing Small Business Rebate Program" to support small businesses in recovering expenses incurred after experiencing property damage due to crime and vandalism, and to recoup expenses after taking measures to prevent vandalism.

The program will be available on an application basis starting this Fall and retroactive to January 1, 2023.

Prevention measures eligible for funding could include security cameras or gates. The costs of broken glass and graffiti cleaning will be eligible under the vandalism repairs criteria.

Information about how businesses can apply for funding is expected to be made available in the Fall and communicated through local chambers of commerce and business improvement organizations to ensure business owners can access the rebate as soon as possible.

/2

We understand and appreciate that ministries across your government are working to address the root causes of crime in Saskatchewan communities, including new measures to address unmanaged addiction and mental health cases in Saskatoon. While this important work is underway, support to our local SMEs will ensure that they can address vandalism and property damage quickly and take steps to continue serving our communities.

We will share details of BC's program as they come available. In the meantime, we would be pleased to meet with your officials to explore how a similar program would benefit our local economy and business community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jason Aebig, CEO
Greater Saskatoon Chamber of Commerce

cc. His Worship Charlie Clark, Mayor of Saskatoon
Chief Troy Cooper, Saskatoon Police Service
Chief Morgan Hackl, Saskatoon Fire
Hon. Gordon Wyant, MLA for Saskatoon Northwest
Hon. Don Morgan, MLA for Saskatoon Southeast
Hon. Bronwyn Eyre, MLA for Saskatoon-Stonebridge-Dakota
Ken Cheveldayoff, MLA for Saskatoon Willowgrove
Marv Friesen, MLA for Saskatoon Riversdale
Lisa Lambert, MLA for Saskatoon Churchill-Wildwood
David Buckingham, MLA for Saskatoon Westview
Brent Penner, Downtown Saskatoon
Randy Pshebylo, Riversdale Business Improvement District
DeeAnn Mercier, Broadway Business Improvement District
Sheldon Wasylenko, Sutherland Business Improvement District
Stephanie Clovechok, Discover Saskatoon
Erin Lawson, SREDA